

Saturday Magazine.

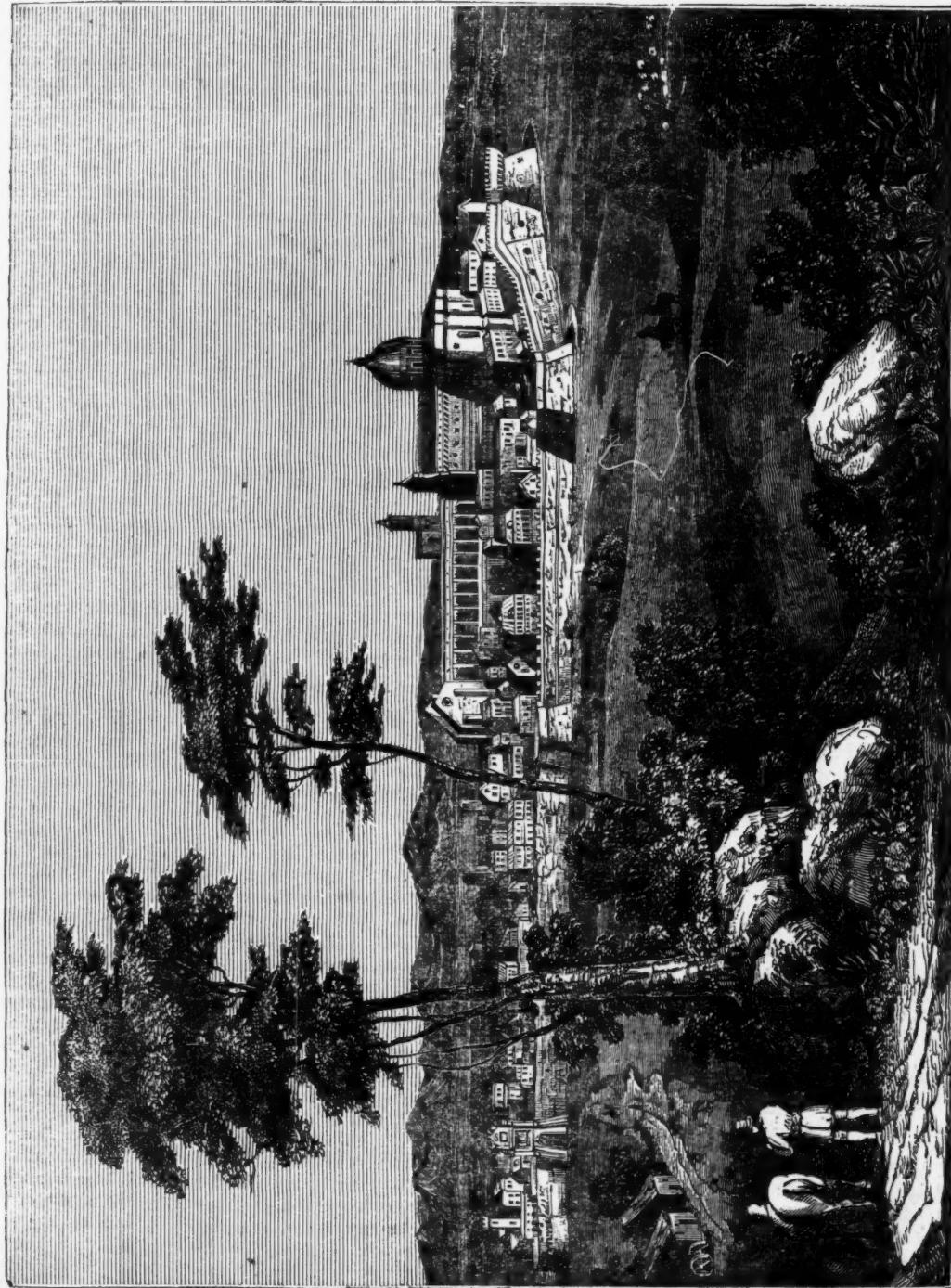
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THE CITY OF LORETO.

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LORETTO, or Loreto, is a small town of Italy, situated in the Papal States, and in the district known by the name of the Marche of Ancona; it is about fourteen miles distant from the town of that name, and not more than three miles from the shores of the Adriatic. It stands on a bold eminence, commanding an extensive and varied prospect; "to the north," says the author of the *Classical Tour*, "rise Osimo, the Auximum of the ancients, and Camurano, each on a lofty hill; also, close to the sea, an abbey, perched on the summits of Monte Gomero. On the south, Monte Santo, anciently Sacrata, and Macerata; to the west, Recanati, and Monte Fiore, with the Apennines rising, broken, white, and craggy, behind; while to the east, between two hills, the Adriatic spreads its blue expanse, and brightening as it retires from the shore, vanishes gradually in the white fleecy clouds that border the horizon."

The town, which is altogether modern, has in itself little that is attractive; Mr. Woods characterizes it as "a miserable little town, with an unfinished Piazza, and a large church." This Piazza is of an oblong form, and had it been finished according to the original design, would have presented a handsome appearance; it was intended to have a double range of arches on three sides, leaving the church to occupy the fourth; and these would thus have formed, as it were, an avenue, with two stories of arcades, to that edifice,—an arrangement which could not have failed to produce a very pleasing effect. The church, or *duomo*, has little to recommend it beyond its size; it is built in the form of a cross, and is said on the spot to have been designed by Michael Angelo, and executed by Bramante,—a manifest error—since Michael Angelo did not begin to study architecture till after the death of Bramante.

The nave is in a sort of Gothic style, having square piers, with a little shaft at each angle, but possessing neither richness, lightness, nor the appearance of solidity. Beyond the nave is an octagonal space, which is formed by the intersection of the four arms of the cross, and above which rises the dome of the building. There are three tribunes forming the arms of the cross; but even this part is said to be not handsome.

The fame of Loretto rests entirely on the veneration with which it has been for ages regarded by the followers of the Popish religion; the town has, indeed, been well styled "the Mecca of Italy," and it deserves, as Malte Brun remarks, "a place in the history of superstition." The source of its attractions is the possession of the *Santa Casa*, or "Holy House," as it is called,—a little ugly building, which the Romanists assert to have been, in former ages, the veritable dwelling of the Virgin Mary. The legend which has been fabricated for the protection of this "clumsy imposture" is this:—that in the year 1291, the house of the Virgin, at Nazareth, which had been for some time previously converted into a chapel, was carried off by angels, through the air, and deposited near Tersato, in Dalmatia; that three years afterwards it was transported by the same angels, in the same miraculous manner, across the Adriatic, to the coast of Italy, and planted at the distance of a thousand paces from the sea, in the neighbourhood of Recanati; that eight months afterwards it fixed itself a thousand paces nearer the town; and finally completed its migrations by taking up its station on the lands of a noble lady called Lauretta, and there giving rise to the present city of Loretto.

"Such is, at least, in general," says Eustace, "the

account given at Loretto; circulated all over Italy, piously admitted by many holy persons, and not a little encouraged by the Popes. I need not say, however, that many men of reflection in Italy, and, indeed, within the precincts of Loretto itself, consider this wonderful story as an idle tale, or at best a pious dream, conceived by a heated imagination, and circulated among an ignorant race of peasants and fishermen. They suppose the holy house to have been a cottage or building long buried in a pathless forest, and unnoticed in a country turned almost into a desert by a succession of civil wars, invasions, and revolutions, during the space of ten or twelve centuries. A dream,—an accidental coincidence of circumstances, might have led one or more persons to the discovery of this long-forgotten edifice; and such an incident working on minds heated by solitude and enthusiasm, might easily have produced the conviction, and propagated the belief of the wonderful tale."

But whatever was the source of the delusion,—whether it had its origin in fanaticism or imposture,—it was greedily swallowed by the Roman Catholics of the day, and has been carefully kept up to the present hour by the artifices of their church. Kings and nobles, the rich and the poor, all became eager to testify their admiration of the supposed relic; and in token of their faith, offered rich and costly presents to the object of their idolatry. The *Santa Casa* soon became encased in a covering of marble; and for its further protection, a spacious church, that which we have described, was erected over it.

The holy house, which stands immediately under the dome in the church, is a building of oblong form, about thirty feet long, fifteen feet wide, and eighteen feet high; "many," says Malte Brun, "imagine it to be without foundation, and that it rests on the ground," a consequence, apparently, of their belief in its wonderful migrations. It appears to be built of Apennine limestone; but it is so polished with kisses, and blackened with the smoke of the many lamps, which are constantly burning, that it is difficult to tell what it is. Instead of a roof it is covered with a vault, which is admitted to be modern, the old timber-work having decayed. Externally it is incrusted with a coat of white Carrara marble, decorated with Corinthian columns and rich ornaments, the architecture of Bramante. The principal subject of the bas-reliefs is the history of the Virgin; Addison notices among the ornaments some statues of the Sibyls and the Prophets, which he praises as very finely wrought. Above the chimney in the eastern wall, is the niche, once fenced in with solid gold, but now with gilt-wood, which contains the cedar image of the Virgin, in a dress glittering with precious stones, before which "thousands bow down in abject idolatry."

To this shrine the Romanists still repair in considerable numbers: before the Reformation, it is said that upwards of two hundred thousand used to visit it each year. The appearance of the town indicates at once the character of its visitants and the object of their visits; almost all the shops in it are devoted to the sale of rosaries, crosses, &c.,—though the trade in them has fallen off considerably of late years. "My travelling companions," says Mr. Woods, "wondered how I could doubt about the holy house, as so many miracles had been wrought by it, particularly a well-authenticated story of a man who had stolen a candlestick, but having sat down with it on the road, could not get it up again. I suggested that these miracles only took place against petty robbers, and that, when the whole was plun-

dered on a late occasion, the Virgin or her image was quiet. One of the party seemed very much surprised at the difficulty I made about miracles: "Why," says he, "all history is full of miracles." He began to cite a number from Livy: and I found that he believed them just as firmly as those of his own church. These Italians are brought up among alleged miracles; their mind or their fancy is filled with them from their childhood, and they would sooner reject all the moral and doctrinal truths of the Christian religion, than give up their belief in the miraculous interposition of our Lady of the Seven Sorrows, or of St. Anthony of Padua. Nor is this much to be wondered at; the Gospel is taken for granted, but the particular merits of a favourite saint require full exposition and frequent repetition; the priest dwells on these, and the multitude forgets that there is anything of more importance."

The wealth which the zeal of her worshippers accumulated in this shrine of the Virgin was immense. There was a room attached to the church, which was used as the treasury, and which contained the most valuable offerings. It is described by Mr. Woods as a very large and handsome one, simple in its form, and not overloaded with ornaments. The ceiling, as is usual in Italy, has a large cove, leaving only a small flat space in the middle, an arrangement which, in so large and lofty a room, produces a magnificent effect. In the Holy House itself there were twenty-two lamps of gold, of which the largest, an offering from Venice, weighed "eighty marks;" they are said to have been less distinguished for the value of the material than for the delicacy of the workmanship, and the variety of the designs. There were two objects of particular admiration, namely, two crowns of gold, which had been presented, in fulfilment of a vow, by Anne of Austria, the wife of the French king, Louis the Thirteenth, when she gave birth to Louis the Fourteenth, after having been for twenty-two years without children. The diamonds which they contained were counted by thousands: altogether the riches of the treasury of the church were valued at fifteen millions of crowns. Addison speaks of them "as surprisingly great, and as much surpassing his expectation as other sights have generally fallen short of it. Silver," he says, "can scarce find admission, and gold itself looks but poorly among such an incredible number of precious stones. There will be, in a few ages more, the jewels of the greatest value in Europe, if the devotion of its princes continues in its present fervour. The last offering was made by the Queen Dowager of Poland, and cost her 18,000 crowns. Some have wondered that the Turk never attacks this treasury, since it lies so near the sea-shore, and is so weakly guarded. But, besides that he has attempted it formerly with no success, it is certain the Venetians keep too watchful an eye over his motions at present, and would never suffer him to enter the Adriatic. It would, indeed, be an easy thing for a Christian prince to surprise it who has ships still passing to and fro without suspicion, especially if he had a party in the town, disguised like pilgrims, to secure a gate for him, for there have been sometimes to the number of 100,000 in a day's time, as it is generally reported.

Scarcely a century had elapsed from the date of Addison's visit, when this vast collection of riches had almost entirely disappeared. The treasury and the "Holy House" were pillaged during the revolutions which Italy underwent after the French Revolution; and the few works in gold and silver which have been since offered form but a trifling treasure in comparison with that which they have replaced.

"On entering the church at five in the morning," says Mr. Forsyth, "I was surprised to find crowds so early in the Santa Casa, and masses at every altar. This Holy House and its saint struck me as examples of that contrast which the Church of Rome affects in consecrating ugliness. The one is a mean, brick-looking hovel, incased in a shell of sculptured marble; the other is a black, smoked, wooden figure, glittering in jewels and brocade. Seldom is the gift of miracles ascribed to an object of beauty. When this Virgin returned from France, (for she has been a traveller as well as her house,) a new deposite was opened to replace the treasures which had vanished. The Pope presented two golden crowns, and a priest sits fronting the door to receive and register donations; but most of the pilgrims whom I found there appeared as poor as they were pious; they knelt round the furrow which devotion has worn on the pavement."

In a little French work, which was published at Loretto in 1778, under the title of an "Abridgment of the History of our Lady of Loretto, for the Use of the French Nation," we are presented with a succinct account of the migration of the Holy House, purporting to be the copy of an inscription existing on the wall of the church in old French, among a number of similar documents, written in Greek, Polish, Arabic, Spanish, German, Illyrian, Latin, Italian, English, Scotch, and Welsh. In this there are adduced, in support of the truth of the legend, some amusing testimonials, of which it may be said, that they require as large a measure of credulity in him who would believe them, as does the tale itself which they are intended to confirm. When the chapel first made its appearance on the spot which it now occupies, nobody knew whence it came; but in the year 1296, the mystery was explained by the Virgin appearing to one of her faithful devotees in a dream. The man communicated it to his neighbours, and they in order to ascertain the truth of his story, sent a commission of inquiry, composed of six men "of probity and note," to the Holy Land, to visit Jerusalem and Nazareth. "This was done, and the said six men, having taken with them the dimensions of the chapel, they found the situation and the measures to agree, and they found close by an inscription cut in a wall, which informed them that this chapel had stood formerly on that spot, and had disappeared; the said men then returning home, declared and certified all that they had discovered, and thus it was known that the chapel was the house of the Holy Virgin; and thus up to the present time, all true Christians have had a great veneration for our Lady of Loretto; for the Holy Virgin works great miracles there every day which the whole world can testify."

But the evidence upon which the inscription seems to lay the greatest stress, is that of two brothers, natives of the town of Recanati, who appeared before the authorities of the chapel, and testified to the fact of its having been deposited in the wood near Recanati, which formed its second resting-place. The one declared "that the great-great-grandfather of his grandfather had seen the angels carry the said chapel across the sea and place it in the wood, and that he had with many other persons of good faith, visited the chapel in the said wood;" while the other asserted "that his grandfather, when 120 years old, had told him that he had often visited the said chapel in the said wood," and that "the grandfather of his grandfather had a house in which he resided near the said chapel, and that, in his time, the said chapel was transported by the angels to the mount of the two brothers."

THE ANCIENT USE OF ACORNS AS FOOD.

..... The oak
Once formed man's house and oracle, its fruit
His food. Now the patriot monarch leaves
A throne of centuries; leaves the forest
Hills, o'er mountain-waves to rule triumphant
Great father of ships.—LEGENDE.

OAKS among forest-trees have ever stood conspicuously pre-eminent; none have been so uninterruptedly, so universally esteemed, perhaps few have been valued from such different causes. In all ages they have been admired, in some they have been adored; but were never more truly honoured than in the present day. The oak, it is well worthy of remark, has been reverenced by most nations; it was held sacred by the Greeks and the Romans, as well as by the Britons and the Gauls: to them, however, its importance was little known, and it is now more valued, far more justly prized, than when it was the fear of the superstitious as their oracle, or the resort of the hungry for their food.

Little as we now depend for sustenance on the fruits of our forest-trees, and great as is the value of their wood, the reverse was formerly the case. Oak-corn (*i. e.*, *ace-corn*, *aac-corn*, or *acorns*.) some centuries ago formed an important article of food both for man and beast. Oak and Castan mast were staple diet once; and long before our present grains were known, "these fed alike the vassal and his lord." Indeed, so precious were they thought by the Romans, that it was expressly provided by the laws of the twelve tables, that the owner of a tree might gather up his acorns, although they should have fallen upon another man's ground: and Ulpian, who also writes upon this subject, adds that by the Praetor's authority three days must be allowed the owner for carrying them away.

Famines, which of old so continually occurred, history, attributes in part to the failure of these crops; long after the introduction of wheat, and oats, and rye, nay, little more than seven hundred years ago, when other food had in a great measure superseded the use of mast, considerable reliance was still placed thereon, and oaks were chiefly valued for the acorns they produced. In the Saxon chronicle, where the terrible dearth and mortality of eleven hundred and sixteen is described, as a *very heavy-timed, vexatious, and destructive year*, the failure of the mast that season is particularly recorded likewise: "this year, also, was so deficient in mast, that there never was heard such, in all this land, or in Wales."

Cowley, apostrophizing the oak, refers to this patriarchal food, and in a tone that contrasts finely with that of the historians, who state, that when, in the severe Winter of 1709, the poor people of France, from lack of other grain, resorted to the diet of their forefathers, "they were miserably constrained to eat acorns."

Heroes on earth once lived, men good and great,
Acorns their food,—thus fed they flourished,
And equalled in their age the long lived oak.
Happy that race of men most sacred tree,
Thy shade their living house, that house itself,
Shed daily food to feed its peaceful lord.

Pliny states that among the Romans mast-bearing trees were ever held in chief repute; their civic crowns were made of holm, and the oak was sacred to their highest god. To mark more strongly his reverence for such trees, this author, who, as Evelyn observes, is not usually sparing of words, here restrains himself to nine, and forms an entire chapter of one short but emphatic sentence.

The remote annals of all countries are from their

obscurity remarkably alike; and from the records of a few we may trace a faint outline of the little knowledge we possess of the whole. The Greeks, we are informed, were once a most barbarous people, wandering from place to place, and feeding on raw herbs and roots indiscriminately collected; and as Pausanias observes, often on such as were not only unfit for food, but absolutely hurtful. Pelasgus, who taught some wandering tribes to build huts and *eat acorns*, "received divine honours as his meed;" that part of Peloponnesus, also, where they settled, was named from him *Pelasgia*, and the inhabitants were called *Pelasgi*. This era, so often referred to with delight, seems to have been enjoyed but little by those who were cotemporary with it; when the food of kings and chiefs was such as our lowest peasants now refuse to eat, and what men once gave as dainties to their friends, they now despise as fit only for their hogs. We may, therefore, well doubt the veracity of the poet, when he says that men were

Content with food which nature freely bred,
On wildings and on strawberries they fed;
Cornel and bramble-berries gave the rest,
And falling acorns crowned the frugal feast.

The prospect is pleasing when softened by distance, but we confess our conviction that the golden age is now most enjoyed when seen through the long vista of years; indeed, so sensible were the *Pelasgi* of the advantages of clothing, and grateful to Arcas, a subsequent chief, who instructed them in the mystery of making bread, that they called their country after him *Arcadia*, and renamed themselves *Arcades*.

In most countries where they grew, acorns formed more or less the early diet of mankind; by other food they were gradually supplanted, still they long remained in considerable repute, and perhaps prejudice not a little contributed to prolong their fame for it was declared that

Men fed with oaken mast,
The aged trees themselves in years surpassed.

The Greeks, in allusion to the use of acorns as food, called one species of oak *phagos*, or *phegos*, and the Latins *Esclus*, as much as to say, *the tree of eating*, like our word *mast*, for acorns; whence *masten*, to feed or fatten, and *masticate* to chew. Among the Jews also, and even in the more polished ages of their monarchy, this reference was made by Isaiah, "to be eaten as the *teil-tree* and the *oak*:" and in the Mosaic dispensation, it was also enacted that even in an enemy's country, and in time of war, "thou shalt not destroy the trees thereof, by forcing an axe against them: thou mayest eat of them, but thou shalt not cut them down, for the tree of the field is man's life." In the present day, the native oak at Tunis (*Quercus pseudo-coccifera*), is called "the meal-bearing tree," probably, as Smith observes, from the use of the acorns as food; and Parkinson mentions that the American Indians obtain an oil from the glands of the white oak, which they use in cookery. Pliny tells us, that in his time, acorns were still the chief wealth of many nations who enjoyed continual peace, and that elsewhere, in time of scarcity, mast was ground into meal, tempered with water, and made into bread. He also informs us, that in Spain acorns were then brought to table for the dessert, and Strabo states, that in the mountainous parts of that country, the inhabitants ground their acorns into meal. Martyn says it is probable that they are still eaten there, at least by the common people, as Cervantes describes them as being served after the repast by the goat-herds; and Teresa sends a present of the choicest she could collect to the duchess. Indeed, during the French wars in the Peninsula, both

the natives and the invaders frequently fed, and with hungry relish, on the acorns met with in the woods of Portugal and Spain. In the Morea and in Asia Minor, acorns are still sold as food; Desfontaines seems, from his own account, to have relished those of the *Quercus ballota*, which are sold in the public markets of Morocco and Algiers, and eaten by the Moors both raw and roasted. Michaux also ate acorns in Bagdad, and speaks with particular praise of those which grow in Mesopotamia and Curdistan, which he says are as long as the finger; he likewise ate and relished the mast of Spain.

As another instance of the modern use of acorns as food, we may subjoin the following extract from a book published some time since, and called *The United States as they are*. The part referred to is a notice of the American President Jackson, who invited his officers to breakfast with him upon acorns.

General Jackson's military passion led him to take the command of a body of militia destined against the Indians. Jackson knew the character of his opponents, and fought them in their own way. After an unwearyed pursuit from one lurking-place to another, he found them at last and forced them to a stand. During one of these pursuits, the brigadier and his corps fell short of provisions; most of the troops murmured, not excepting the officers, and all desired to return home. Jackson, informed of this discontent, sent his officers an invitation to breakfast with him on the following day. Surprised at such an invitation, the officers made their appearance at the hour appointed, their curiosity much excited by the projected entertainment. A great quantity of acorns were spread on the floor of the hut, which was formed of branches, and the General was seated on the ground. When his guests entered he rose, and pointing to the acorns said to them, "Gentlemen, as long as we have these, we have no reason to complain of want of food. Let us sit down." Without further ceremony he resumed his place, and began to eat this strange repast. The officers made many wry faces, but were obliged to munch the acorns, as no roast beef was to be had. Jackson's perseverance was crowned with success. He charged the Indians and put them to flight.

As a matter of curiosity, we have ourselves had bread made from acorns, and when shelled, and especially if allowed to germinate before used, so that the farina in part becomes converted into sugar, oaken may be made almost as palatable as oatmeal, cakes. We cannot, however, speak quite so favourably of our own manufacture as a Journalist, who ate of our oatmeal cakes, and tasted our oaken bread, has been pleased to do, for in the *Morning Herald* of February 9th, 1830, we find an article headed "Acorns good bread," and which furthermore declares that "the acorn cakes were sweet, and most agreeable to the taste;" certain it is, as he continues, when the company was invited to taste them, "within a few moments all were devoured voraciously."

Agriculture was one of the earliest arts, and to guide the plough the most honoured toil; hence acorns soon became less the food of man than beasts. Strabo records that, in his time, "Rome was chiefly supplied with hogs, which were fattened on *mast* in the woods of Gaul," and once seems to have been their chief value here; for in this country acorns were never so abundantly eaten by man as in many of the continental states, still they were of vast importance for the feeding and fattening of swine. "About the end of the seventh century, King Ina, among the few laws which he enacted, to regulate the simple economy of our Saxon ancestors, gave particular directions concerning the fattening of swine in woods, since then called *pannage*, or *pawnage*." Injuring or destroying trees was by him made penal, and those who did so clandestinely were fined thirty shillings, an immense sum in those days, the very sound of the axe being sufficient for conviction; and

the man who felled a tree, under whose shadow thirty hogs could stand, incurred a double penalty, and was mulcted to sixty shillings. Indeed, when large tracts of this country were forests, the right of running hogs was a common endowment of religious houses, and a valuable possession to private persons; thus Elphemus reserved the pannage of two hundred hogs for his lady, as a part of her dowry, and for this privilege the peasants gave as rent one hog in ten. Offa, king of Mercia, the treacherous assassin of Ethelbert, king of Eastern Anglia, when he had conquered Lothaire, king of Kent, to atone for his sins, especially for the blood in this battle shed, gave a tract of land, including the village of Oftord, near Seven Oaks, to Christchurch, Canterbury, *in pascua porcorum*, as the deed says, for pasture for the Archbishop's hogs. Mast is particularly mentioned about the middle of the eleventh century, in a donation of Edward the Confessor; and, by the Domesday-Book, it would appear, that, in William the Conqueror's time, oaks were still of little further consequence than from the food they afforded to swine, for the value of woods in several counties is estimated by the number of hogs they would fatten. And the survey seems to have been taken very minutely, for in some places woods are mentioned "of one hog." The rights of pannage were greatly encroached on by the Norman princes, in their zeal for extending forests for the chase; and this was one of the grievances which King John was obliged to redress in the charter concerning the liberties of the forest.

This use of mast is still pursued by farmers in the neighbourhood of forests, and it would seem with considerable advantage; for, some years ago, when a patent was granted for extracting oil from beech-nuts, &c., the project failed, as the owners of woods found it more profitable to feed their swine on the mast than to sell it to the patentee. The oil from acorns is used both in America and Africa; and Praevotius commends the oleum "*equernd glandes*," as the least consumptive of any for burning.

The influence of food on the flavour of the flesh of many animals is notorious. At certain seasons the wild ducks of this country are scarcely eatable, from their rank fishy taste; the same may be said of the heath-cocks of Germany, when the juniper-berries are abundant; and the American pheasants, when they feed on the kalmia, have been proved to be poisonous to man; furthermore, Spanish hog-meat, and Westphalia hams, are said to owe their peculiar excellence to the swine being fed on mast, which our limited forests cannot to any extent allow. It is said that a peck of acorns a day, with a little bran, will make a hog increase one pound in weight daily, for two months together. Turkeys, pigeons, and other birds, will feed upon them; the crows of pheasants are often found stuffed therewith, and Smith mentions that a considerable number were taken out of the crop of one, which on being planted grew. They are also sometimes given to oxen. Evelyn recommends to chop them first; an excellent plan, but a needless precaution against his fear, that else, to use his own words, they are apt to sprout and grow in their bellies."

In estimating the value of acorns, as an ancient luxury or a modern food, two circumstances at least require especial notice;—1stly, The acorns of southern Europe are, in comparison with ours, large, succulent, and sweet; for this climate, which has rendered the timber of the English oak so hard, firm, and strong, has wrought a somewhat corresponding, though not equally advantageous change in the fruit,

which, as a food, is greatly deteriorated by the presence of those characters so important in the wood. 2ndly, The *acrodrua*, *balanos*, or *galanos*, of the Greeks, (whence the *glans*, or *fruges, frux, fructus*, of the Latins) like the mast, or corn, *cera*, kernel, of the Saxons, were all generic names, signifying not only the modern acorn, but also the nuts of many trees, as the oak, the chestnut, and the beech, and, subsequently, fruits at large. Thus we have *glans* Phenicia, for the date; *glans* Sardinia, for the chestnut; *glans fagi*, for beech-mast; *Jovis glans*, whence *juglans*, for the walnut; and *glans* pre-eminence, for the oak-corn, or a-corn; hence also the French derive their *glane*, gleaner, and we our *glean*, gleaner, for the collecting of scattered corn; and thus also the Arabs, who call their chief fruit, the date, *Tamar*, name other fruits from it, as Tamar-Indi, or Hendi, the date of India, whence our name for the fruit alluded to, Tamar-ind.

Prejudice, likewise, very much affects both the use and the disuse of many substances as food; indeed fashion is, in this, as in various other respects, all but omnipotent, still regardless of both, and considering the matter in a dietetic view, and as one of economy alone, acorns it must be confessed, in spite of historic recollections, form neither a nutritious nor a wholesome food; and, notwithstanding the energetic remonstrances of those who tell, that "men heretofore, nay even Jupiter himself, fed on acorns till their luxurious palates were depraved, and that when the Romans' second course at table was served up of mast, then men had hearts of oak," there seems little chance that any one would willingly forsake wheat, barley, oats, maize, rice, and rye for the crude and indigestible diet of the oak. I myself have eaten them both raw and roasted, yet can only venture that negative praise which is proverbial blame. Others, however, as we have shown, and Evelyn among them, speak more favourably; indeed he, with the energy of an epicure, exclaims, "the small acorns that are found in stock-doves' crows are a delicious fare." There certainly is no accounting for taste.

B.

BENEFITS OF GENERAL AND POPULAR SCIENCE.

MEN of genius, in former times, have often languished in obscurity, not because their merits were neglected, but because they were not understood. This, however, can scarcely happen in the present day, in which all sources of useful information are laid open, and in which unparalleled exertions have been made in the higher classes of society to diffuse improvement, and to promote all objects of inquiry which can benefit or enlighten the public. There are other uses, still greater uses, resulting from the communication of general and popular science. By means of it vulgar errors and common prejudices are constantly diminished. It offers new topics for conversation, and new interests in life. In solitude, it affords subjects for contemplation, and for an active exercise of the understanding; and in cities, it assists the cause of Religion and morality, by preventing the increase of gross luxury, and indulgence in vicious dissipation.

Man is designed for an active being, and his spirit, ever restless, if not employed upon worthy and dignified objects, will often rather engage in mean and low pursuits, than suffer the tedious and listless feelings connected with indolence; and knowledge is no less necessary in strengthening the mind, than in preserving the purity of the affections and the heart.

—SIR HUMPHRY DAVY.

THE BIBLE.

A Book which Sir Isaac Newton esteemed the most authentic of all histories; which, by its celestial light, illuminates the darkest ages of antiquity; which is the touchstone whereby we are enabled to distinguish between true and fabulous theology; between the God of Israel, holy, just, and good, and the impudent heathen Baalim; which has been thought, by competent judges, to have afforded matter for the laws of Solon, and a foundation for the philosophy of Plato, which has been illustrated by the labour of learning in all ages and countries; and been admired and venerated for its piety, its sublimity, its veracity, by all who were able to read and understand it.—
BISHOP WATSON.

THE MONTH OF JULY.

On, 'tis a sight the soul to cheer,
The promise of the fruitful year,
When God abroad his bounty flings,
And answering nature laughs and sings !
He, "for the evil and the good,"
For them, who with heart's gratitude,
And them, who thanklessly receive
The blessings he vouchsafes to give,
Bids from his storehouse in the skies
"His rain descend, his sun arise!"

I love to see kind heav'n bestow
Abundance on mankind below :
Then chief, when 'tis bestowed in ONE
Who lives not for himself alone,
But, like the rich and fruitful ground,
What he receives, disperses round,
In part to bless the sons of men ;
And grateful, gives a part again,
Like incense-breathing fields, to rise
In tribute to the bounteous skies.

Nor less I love to see the store
Augmented of the LOWLY POOR ;
By honest toil industrious wrought,
By frugal care, and prudent thought,
With peacefulness and heart's content,
Which of the FOUNT OF GOOD, that sent
Life and its blessings, mindful, pays
To Him the meed of thankful praise.
And though to Him, who gives us all,
The turf-built altar be but small,
The offering there of little price ;
And from that humble sacrifice,
So the world deems, a trivial flame
Ascending, though with heavenward aim,
With but a feeble light arise,
And seek acceptance from the skies :—
I know not but as rich a scent

That turf-built altar may present,

Expressive of the heart's desire,

That offering poor, and feeble fire,

As grateful to the smell divine ;

As flaming on the golden shrine,

Ten thousand hecatombs, and more,

In homage from the imperial store.

To ALL, what best his wisdom knows,
The bounty of our God bestows.

From ALL, to whom a boon he gives

But most from HIM who most receives,

In acts below of peace and love,

In acts of praise to HIM above,

He claims, of what he gives a part,

From all at least, a THANKFUL HEART,

Which, soaring on devotion's wing,

Up to the throne of NATURE'S KING

Itself in holy vision lifts,

And owns the GIVER in his gifts.

[Abridged from BISHOP MANT'S *British Months.*]

If one train of thinking be more desirable than another, it is that which regards the phenomena of nature with a constant reference to a Supreme intelligent Author. To have made this the ruling, the habitual sentiment of our minds, is to have laid the foundation of every thing that is religious. The world from thenceforth becomes a temple, and life itself one continued act of adoration.—PALEY.

OF THE NOURISHMENT AND GROWTH OF ANIMALS.

ALL the animals of the creation, as well as the plants, have their original nourishment from the simple materials of earth and water. That all flesh is grass, is true in the literal as well as metaphorical sense.

What very different animals are nourished by the same vegetable food ! the self-same herbage or fruits of the earth by the divine laws of nature and providence are converted into animated bodies of very distinct kinds. The black and the brindled kine, with the horses, both gray and bay, clothe themselves with their hairy skins of such various colours, out of the same green pasture where the sheep feeds and covers himself with his white and woolly fleece ; and, at the time, the goose is cropping part of the grass to nourish its own flesh, and to array itself with down and feathers. An animated body is made up of flesh and blood, bones and membranes, long hollow tubes with a variety of liquors contained in them, together with many strings and tendons, and a thousand other things which escape the naked sight, and for which anatomy has hardly found a name : yet the very same food is, by the wondrous skill and appointment of the God of nature, formed into all these amazing differences. Let us take an ox to pieces, and survey the composition. Besides the flesh of this huge living structure, and the bones on which it is built, what variety of tender coats and humours belong to that admirable organ, the eye ! How solid and hard are the teeth which grind the food ! How firm the general ligaments that tie the joints of that creature together ! What horny hoofs are his support ; and with what different sort of horny weapons has Nature furnished his forehead ! Yet they are all framed of the same grassy materials : the calf grazes upon the verdant pasture, and all its limbs and powers grow up out of the food to the size and firmness of an ox. It is the wisdom of the God of nature that distributes this uniform food into the several parts of the animal by his appointed laws, and gives proper nourishment to each of them.

So near akin is man, the lord of the creation, in respect of his body, to the brutes that are his slaves, that the very same food will compose the flesh of both of them, and make them grow up to their appointed stature. The same bread-corn which we eat at our tables will give rich support to sparrows and pigeons, to the turkey and the duck, and all the fowls of the yard : the mouse steals it, and feeds on it in its retirement ; while the hog in the sty, and the horse at the manger, would be glad to partake of it.

How various are our dishes at an entertainment ! How has luxury even tired itself in the invention of meats and drinks in an excessive and endless variety ! Yet, when they pass into the stomach, and are carried thence through the intestines, there is a white juice strained out of the strange mixture called chyle, which, by lacteal vessels, is converted into the same crimson liquor. This being distributed through all the body by the arteries, is further strained again through the proper vessels, and becomes the spring of nourishment to every different part of the animal. Thus the God of nature has ordained, that how various soever our meats are, they shall first be reduced to an uniform milky liquid, which, by the contrivances of divine art, is again diversified into flesh and bones, nerves and membranes.—WATTS.

EXCELLENCE is providentially placed beyond the reach of indolence, that success may be the reward of industry, and that idleness may be punished with obscurity and disgrace.

—COWPER.

THE HABITS OF A MAN OF BUSINESS.

A SACRED regard to the principles of justice forms the basis of every transaction, and regulates the conduct of the upright man of business. He is strict in keeping his engagements, does nothing carelessly or in a hurry, employs nobody to do what he can easily do himself, keeps everything in its proper place, leaves nothing undone which ought to be done, and which circumstances permit him to do ; keeps his designs and business from the view of others, is prompt and decisive with his customers, and does not over-trade for his capital ; prefers short credits to long ones, and cash to credit at all times, either in buying or selling ; and small profits, in credit cases, with little risk, to the chance of better gains with more hazard. He is clear and explicit in all his bargains ; leaves nothing of consequence to memory which he can and ought to commit to writing ; keeps copies of all his important letters which he sends away, and has every letter, invoice, &c., belonging to his business, titled, classed, and put away ; never suffers his desk to be confused with many papers lying upon it. Is always at the head of his business, well knowing that if he leave it, it will leave him ; holds it as a maxim, that he whose credit is suspected is not safe to be trusted ; is constantly examining his books, and sees through all his affairs, as far as care and attention enable him ; balances regularly at stated times, and then makes out and transmits all his accounts current to his customers and constituents, both at home and abroad ; avoids as much as possible, all sorts of money-matters and law-suits where there is the least hazard. He is economical in his expenditure ; always living within his income ; keeps a memorandum-book, with a pencil, in his pocket, in which he notes every little particular relative to appointments, addresses, and petty-cash matters ; is cautious how he becomes security for any person, and is generous only when urged by motives of humanity. —?

THE GRANITE ROCKS OF CORNWALL.

THE annexed Engraving represents one of those detached blocks so frequently, or almost constantly, found upon the eminences of the elevated tract in which the granite always appears, at the surface. It is to be seen on the summit of Carnbrae, a short walk only from Redruth, and a better example of the kind of appearance that it presents could hardly be desired. The surface of the rock, it will be observed, is hollowed into several basins ; between the higher and lower basins is a communication by an open breach in their common separation ; sometimes the depth of this breach is the same as that of the upper basin, and thus that basin is completely drained ; in other cases, a second and a third are in the same manner left dry. Occasionally, a small cistern of the clearest water is found in those hollow places ; a striking circumstance to the beholder, both from the nature of the contrast and the seeming improbability of such an occurrence. It must be remarked that the surface of the whole rock, and particularly of the interior of these basins, exhibits a decided water-worn appearance ; and, not unfrequently, a considerable sediment is found in these little wells, evidently derived from the wearing of the rock, as it consists of crystalline particles, belonging to the substance of the rock, and bearing the same appearance as the surface of the whole mass.

Granite appears to the eye to be a most compact and durable substance, as well as to the hand that attacks it with bar or chisel ; but nicer observation

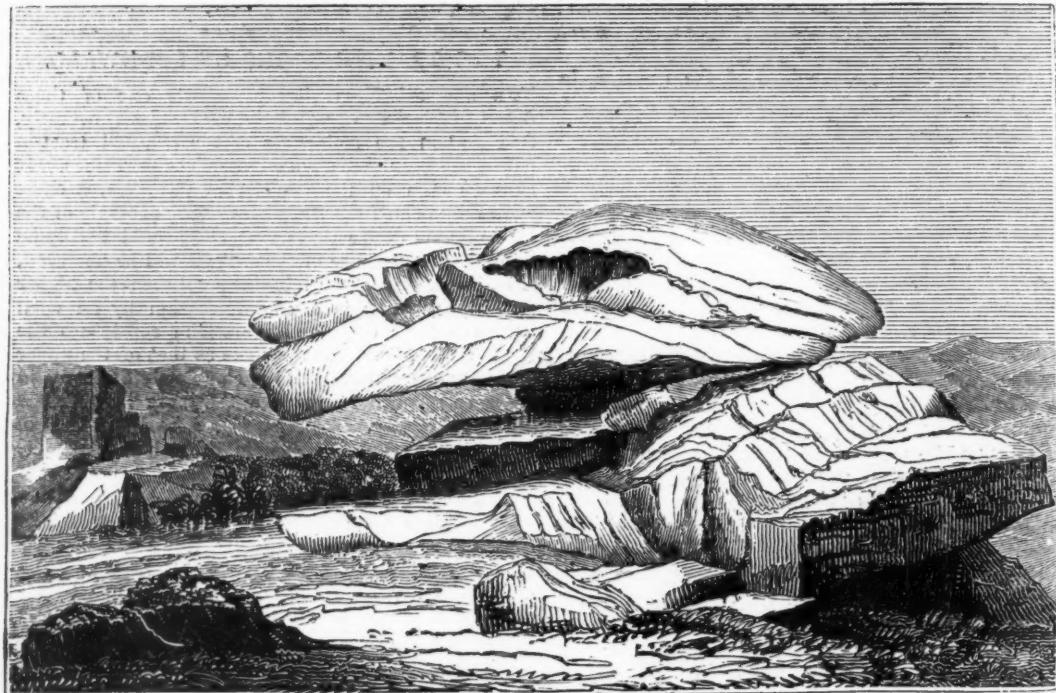
points out a concealed agency, slow, but certain and efficient, by which it is decomposed. The chemical action of rain-water, if not quickly expelled from its surface, is not slow in dissolving the connexion between those innumerable grains, the appearance of which supplied the rock with its name; proofs of which fact are continually supplied in the decay of those parts of gate-posts and crosses which are covered by the soil.

Another remarkable circumstance in the present case is the situation of the block, which seems to occupy a slanting position, and might be expected at any instant to slide downwards; its surface of support, too, in comparison with the whole block is very small, and these circumstances make it a curious and interesting example of equilibrium. The cause of this state of rest being preserved, is to be seen in the excess of that portion which lies over the surface of support, above that which extends beyond that surface; as long as that excess exists, the body of the rock will rest in its present position, but should one or more of the basins on the unsupported part be worn very deep, the connexion of the outside mass may become so thin, as to be unable to bear the weight of that mass, and it will be snapped asunder as a thread would be were a pound weight to be hung upon it. Instances of this very fact may be observed in the midst of the fragments that lie scattered around their parent mass. But we must not lose sight of other sources of interest which these remarkable rocks possess; I mean the popular accounts of them, and their connexion with the earliest history of the country, attributed to them by the enthusiasm of the antiquarian.

These basins in Cornwall are called "kettles and pans;" the inhabitants of the Scilly Isles have a different version of the title,—theirs are "crockes and kettles!" If resemblance is to determine the pro-

priety of the title, the decision must be given in favour of the former, and even then it must be confessed, that those domestic utensils have received very considerable alteration in shape since the primitive models were executed, we must not omit to state by whose hands,—the giants of those days,—whose property they are allowed to have been. That there is room for the supposition, is sufficient to confirm the fancy of a genuine antiquarian in favour of a particular object being the work of some of his venerated personages, and, according to him, these must needs have been formed by the Druids; but the frequency of them, and the peculiar situation (in some cases on the perpendicular face of the rock), together with the results of observation, seem sufficiently to disprove this interpretation.

It must, however, be remembered, that this district was certainly once the seat of Druidical superstition; and seeing ample evidence, in the remnants of camps and castles, that it has also been the theatre of violence and terror, we may well contemplate, with delight and gratitude, the influences of peace and civilization in their place, promoted and sanctified by the benign influences of Christianity. The ruin of hills, and the other changes which the surface of our globe undergoes, like the autumnal fall of a leaf, supplies an awful type of frailty and decay; but, in reality, we must see in all these a wise provision, to ensure upon the surface of the earth that round of changes, so necessary to animal and vegetable existence. While we contemplate the circumstances by which these changes are brought about, and discover in scenes of apparent wildness and confusion, such as this district displays, the traces of order and intelligence, our feelings should be like those of the mariner cast upon an unknown shore, at the sight of a footprint in the sand, with whom we may joyfully exclaim,—"A God dwelleth here."



REMARKABLE GRANITE ROCK ON THE SUMMIT OF CARNBRAE, NEAR REDRUTH.